

**What is claimed is:**

1. A picture coding method for coding a progressive picture signal including at least either a cinema signal part which was originally a cinema signal or an NTSC signal part which was  
5 originally an NTSC signal for television broadcasting, the picture coding method comprising:

a sampling step of sampling frames from frames in the cinema signal part in the progressive picture signal using a first method and frames from frames in the NTSC signal part in the progressive  
10 picture signal using a second method; and

a coding step of coding the frames which are sampled in the sampling step.

2. The picture coding method according to Claim 1,  
15 wherein, in the sampling step, the sampling is performed using either the first method or the second method, depending on telecine conversion information indicating whether the progressive picture signal was originally a cinema signal or an NTSC signal.

3. The picture coding method according to Claim 1,  
20 wherein the cinema signal part in the progressive picture signal is a signal that includes two identical consecutive frames for every predetermined number of frames, the signal being a progressive picture signal converted from an NTSC signal which has  
25 been converted from the cinema signal, and

in the first method, one of said two frames is eliminated, and the sampling is performed at equal intervals.

4. The picture coding method according to Claim 3,  
30 wherein, in the first method, the sampling is performed at equal intervals in which the number of frames per second is a divisor of 24.

5. The picture coding method according to Claim 1,  
wherein the cinema signal part in the progressive picture  
signal is a signal that includes two identical consecutive frames for  
every predetermined number of frames, the signal being a  
5 progressive picture signal converted from an NTSC signal which has  
been converted from the cinema signal, and

in the first method, the sampling is performed in a manner in  
which frame intervals become predetermined unequal intervals with  
10 respect to said two identical consecutive frames.

6. The picture coding method according to Claim 5,  
wherein, in the first method, the sampling is performed in the  
following manner with respect to the latter of the two frames in  
15 display order: sampling is first performed at a rate of one frame for  
every two frames, and then at a rate of one frame for every three  
frames, after which sampling is repeatedly performed at these rates.

7. The picture coding method according to Claim 5,  
20 wherein, in the first method, the sampling is performed in the  
following manner with respect to the former of the two frames in  
display order: sampling is first performed at a rate of one frame for  
every three frames, and then at a rate of one frame for every two  
frames, after which sampling is repeatedly performed at these rates.

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8. The picture coding method according to Claim 5,  
wherein, in the first method, the sampling is performed in the  
following manner with respect to a subsequent frame of the two  
frames in display order: sampling is first performed at a rate of one  
30 frame for every two frames, and then at a rate of one frame for every  
three frames, after which sampling is repeatedly performed at these  
rates.

9. The picture coding method according to Claim 1, further comprising an original picture judgment step of judging whether each frame in the progressive picture signal was originally a cinema signal or an NTSC signal, based on said progressive picture signal.

10. The picture coding method according to Claim 9, wherein the cinema signal part in the progressive picture signal is a signal that includes two identical consecutive frames for every predetermined number of frames, the signal being a progressive picture signal converted from an NTSC signal which has been converted from the cinema signal, and

the original picture judgment step includes:

a delay step of delaying a frame in the progressive picture signal by one frame;

a similarity calculation step of calculating a degree of similarity between a frame in the input progressive picture signal and the frame which has been delayed by one frame in the delay step;

a match judgment step of judging whether the two consecutive frames match or not based on the degree of similarity calculated in the similarity calculation step, and outputting a match signal when said two consecutive frames are judged to match each other; and

a cycle judgment step of judging whether said each frame in the progressive picture signal was originally a cinema signal or an NTSC signal, based on a cycle indicated by the match signal outputted in the match judgment step.

11. A picture coding apparatus for coding a progressive picture signal including at least either a cinema signal part which was originally a cinema signal or an NTSC signal part which was

originally an NTSC signal for television broadcasting, the picture coding apparatus comprising:

a sampling conversion unit operable to sample the input progressive picture signal using a different sampling conversion method depending on telecine conversion information indicating whether the progressive picture signal was originally a cinema signal or an NTSC signal, and output the sampled progressive picture signal; and

a picture coding unit operable to code said progressive picture signal outputted by the sampling conversion unit.

12. A program for coding a progressive picture signal including at least either a cinema signal part which was originally a cinema signal or an NTSC signal part which was originally an NTSC signal for television broadcasting, the program causing a computer to execute the following steps:

a sampling step of sampling frames from frames in the cinema signal part in the progressive picture signal using a first method and frames from frames in the NTSC signal part in the progressive picture signal using a second method; and

a coding step of coding the frames which are sampled in the sampling step.

13. A computer-readable recording medium which stores coded picture data which has been generated by coding a progressive picture signal including a cinema signal part which was originally a cinema signal,

wherein, in the cinema signal part in the coded picture data, frames in the progressive picture signal were sampled at predetermined unequal intervals.